

## This Week In Agriculture

July 3-9, 2005

# Governor Kempthorne joins in Lucky Peak 50th birthday celebration

By Wayne Hoffman

Idahoans celebrated the 50th birthday of Lucky Peak Dam on June 23, and Governor Dirk Kempthorne urged the crowd that gathered for the event to be the visionaries responsible for maintaining it for future generations.

Lucky Peak is an earth filled dam that cost \$19.9 million to construct in 1955, but the dam is estimated to have prevented more than \$500 million in damages since its completion.

While the dam was originally built primarily for flood control, it also provides 280,000 acre feet of irrigation water storage and provides supplementary water for area farms.

The reservoir behind the dam is one of the state's most popular parks, playing host more than a million visitors each year.

"Lucky Peak means so much more to us today than flood control," the Governor said in his speech to a crowd gathered for the birthday celebration. "Thousands of acres of valuable farmland and Idaho commodi-

ties benefit from the water stored here. More than a million visitors come here every year to swim and boat and fish.

"I have to imagine that as Harry Morrison stood here 50 years ago, this is exactly what he had in mind. The visionaries who dreamed of this project saw more than just an earth filled dam spanning nearly half a mile and towering above the channel. I think they saw great economic opportunity for this valley."



Governor Kempthorne speaks at a celebration on Lucky Peak's 50th birthday.

**Please see Lucky Peak  
Page 2**

On June 17, 2005, the Idaho State Department of Agriculture welcomed Jessica Hansen of Homedale as "Director for a Day." Hansen, a participant in the Idaho Girls State program and Idaho Beef Ambassador, toured the department's offices and labs and met with the staff.



Top left: Jessica examines seeds under a microscope; top right: Sandy Kaufman shows Jessica our animal labs. Bottom left: James Scannell shows off the seed lab. Bottom right: Jessica meets with Deputy Director Mike Everett.

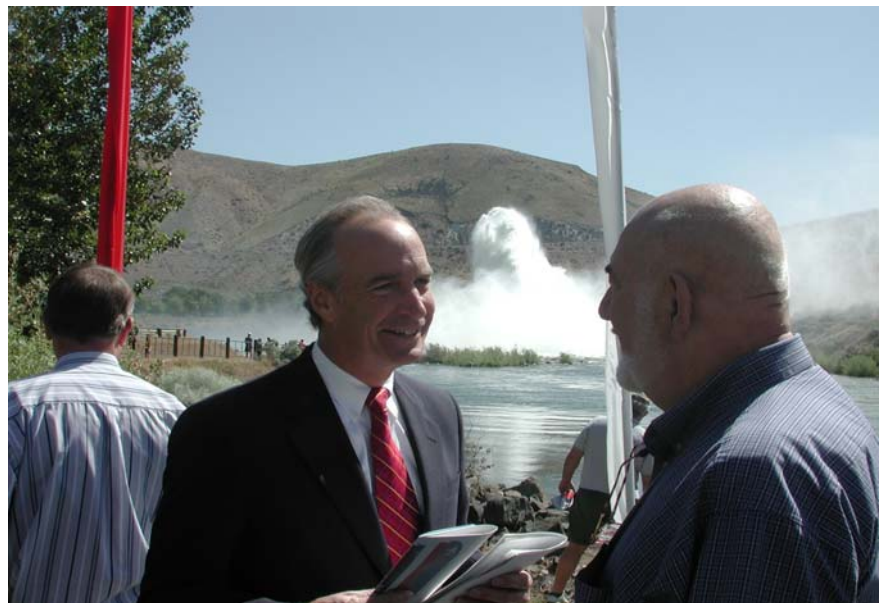


## Lucky Peak (continued from page 1)

The governor also credited the dam with inspiring the Boise city government while he was mayor to complete acquisitions necessary to connect the 19-miles Boise River Greenbelt.

And he challenged Idahoans to preserve and value Lucky Peak for the future.

"We owe it to the visionaries of a half a century ago to care for and preserve this treasure of ours," Kempthorne said. "If we do, 50 years from now, another Idaho governor will stand here at the centennial of Lucky Peak and recall not only the vision of the people who started this project, but the vision of those who kept the dream alive."



The Governor visits with Boise Councilman Vern Bisterfeldt after the Lucky Peak birthday celebration on June 23, 2005.



The Animal ID Project at the Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) is reaching out to Idahoans on this new program and providing premises ID registration services.

The Animal ID Project started in Idaho in the fall of 2004, and now is far surpassing any other state in premises ID registration and other activities. With more than 15,000 premises registered to date, Idaho has moved into the forefront to implement the USDA National Animal Identification System.

The Animal ID team traveled to Jackson Hole, WY recently to attend a tri-state veterinary meeting and present information on Animal ID. Dr. Clarence Siroky, ISDA State Veterinarian, Dr. Jim England from the UI

Caine Center, Dr. Michael Coe with Global Animal Management and Linda Cope of ISDA all presented to veterinarians from across the country.

It was a positive experience that yielded excellent feedback from the veterinarian community.

Next, the Animal ID team attended the Idaho Cattleman's Association Mid-Year Conference in Cascade.

Cattlemen were given information on all aspects of the program and specific progress made on premises ID.

Many of the group's members submitted premises ID registration forms if they had not already obtained a number.

Dr. Siroky also presented his pictures from Australia's ID system to the entire group. Those in attendance gathered valuable information from ISDA and pro-

vided helpful feedback.

Field trials on equipment and processes continue to thrive through the ISDA Animal ID project, and soon more information on those findings will be available online at <http://www.idahoag.us>.

Stay tuned!



Photo courtesy of USDA

## Idaho Senators co-sponsor bipartisan pesticide legislation

Idaho Senators Mike Crapo and Larry Craig co-sponsored legislation introduced in June to protect the proper use of pesticides by codifying in law that additional permitting is not needed for pesticides use in compliance with their Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approved label.



U.S. Sen.  
Larry Craig

Recent court decisions have contradicted long-standing federal policy that the application of agricultural and other pesticides in compliance with labeling requirements do not require National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits.

This has created ambiguity for pesticide users.

The Pest Management and Fire Suppression Act, S. 1269, would provide further clarity by ensuring that National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits would not be required if a pesticide is used to, near or over a waterway in accordance with its labeling and other federal regulations.

"Farmers, fire fighters, irrigators and mosquito abatement districts must have access to the tools necessary to manage pests and maintain public health," said Crapo. "The EPA conducts substantial testing of pesticides, and the health of Idaho families

should not be compromised by additional unnecessary hurdles."

"Adding yet another layer of regulation and bureaucracy onto pesticide application is not what Idaho farmers and irrigators need," Craig said. "We have an established, functioning process that tests these agents and regulates their use. Requiring NPDES permits for application is redundant, unnecessary, and ill-suited to agriculture. It is an attempt to redefine current law through lawsuits, rather than the legislative process, and we must say 'enough is enough.'"

The legislation was sponsored by Senate Environment and Public Works Chairman James Inhofe.

## Guest opinion: Innovation can unlock the potential of rural Idaho

**I**n many years of commuting between Washington, D.C. and Idaho, I've never tired of the view as Snake River Plain drops away below the airplane, giving way to the Tetons and the Sawtooth National Forest. From the perspective of 20,000 feet, the sharp contrast of high plateau and densely-forested mountains brings to mind another contrast increasingly endemic to Idaho—the widening economic gap between urban and rural Idaho.

One-third of Idahoans live in the Treasure Valley; the rest of the population spans the remaining 90 percent of the state. Urban areas statewide are experiencing promising economic development. In May, the Bureau of Labor Statistics rated Idaho's non-farm job growth third in the nation. Forbes Magazine recently identified Boise as the top place in the nation to start a business or career based on business costs, educated labor force and cost of living. "Cities Ranked and Rated," listed Coeur d'Alene and Idaho Falls in the top ten "emerging cities" last year. Both Outside and Sunset Magazines rated Sandpoint a national "Best" small town this past year.

For many of Idaho's rural communities, the story is very different. Some have lost population, are experiencing failing infrastructure and losing higher paying natural resource industries jobs to lower paying service sector employment. Whether it's the closing of a canning plant in Jerome, frozen foods plant in Lewiston, or a potato plant in Burley, or

young adults struggling to find summer work in Latah and Nez Perce Counties, these communities are suffering economically.

Historically, rural Idaho has provided our country with natural resource products. But, in recent decades, mills and mines have closed and farming has become consolidated and mechanized. The resulting job loss has been offset by creativity and innovation of the high tech industry, and growth in production and fabrication—with this caveat: many people must leave their rural roots to find financial security.

**T**his is an alarming trend. Our rural communities play a vital role in our overall quality of life and the "idea" of Idaho. These important places must be re-invigorated from the inside and from the outside. While we encourage rural wage and infrastructure growth, we must also spread the word about our priceless rural resources. Their loss is the loss of our American heart.

The intrinsic potential of rural communities can be cultivated with the right methods. The federal government has provided Payment in Lieu of Taxes from timber receipts and when those declined, a guaranteed payment under Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act. The Federal government can continue to play a role by supporting universal service for Broadband, rural telehealth and national transportation corridors. Furthermore, federal policies can be formulated which ad-

dress specific needs of rural communities, such as infrastructure and the direct relationship between effective farm to market transportation and rural communities' viability. These policies must also consider broader issues of energy and food source security, in short, the role that native natural resources play in national self-sufficiency.

Innovative collaborative partnerships are key to rural revitalization. The Hayden Wastewater facility, the Kootenai Valley Resource Initiative in Boundary County, and the Owyhee Initiative are some examples of community-based collaboration creating comprehensive solutions. As local, state and federal agencies, private industry, advocacy groups, local residents and higher education engage in substantive dialogue, communities benefit directly and in the long term. This dialogue also achieves balance between economic and environmental concerns. Broad participation gives people a stake in the outcome, a reason to remain engaged and a reason to invest in their community's future.



U.S. Sen.  
Mike Crapo

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